THE MINISTER OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MEIRA KUMAR): (a) There are six apex level National Institutions (NIs) functioning in the field of disability, each headed by a Director. Two posts of Director are vacant.

(b) The post of Director National Institutes of Visually Handicapped (NIVH) was advertised. No suitable candidate had applied. Effort was made to obtain suitable person on deputation from Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and from the Director General Armed Forces Medical Services. In respect of Director of National Institute of Rehabilitation, Training and Research (NIRTAR), the post was advertised for the third time as no suitable candidate had applied in response to 2 earlier advertisements. The Selection Committee has met and the case is being processed. The Director National Institute for the Orthopaedically Handicapped (NIOH) has been temporarily stationed at Lucknow to accelerate the functioning of the Composite Rehabilitation Centre.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) The National Commission for Persons with Disabilities (NCPD) had recommended that the office of Chief Commissioner Disabilities(CCD) should continue. In view of the overlapping of the function of CCD and the Central Coordination Committee (CCC) both set up under the Persons with Disability Act, 1995 it was decided to wind up the National Commission for Persons with Disability (NCPD).

Stress-free examination

*113. SHRI S.M. LALJAN BASHA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that CBSE plans stress-free examination measures for reducing stress on students;

(b) whether it is also a fact that CBSE proposes to give students extra 15 minutes before commencement of the examination to study the question papers;

(c) if so, the ways in which this would help students; and

(d what other steps CBSE proposes to make the entire examination systems stress-free?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMET (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): (a) to (d) The attention of the Government has been drawn to the problem of examination-reated stress amongst students. With a view towards evolving consensus on the issue, a meeting of eminent educationists, Heads of Boards of Examination and others was called by the Minister of Human Resource Development on 24th March, 2005. The issues have since been discussed on 1st May, 2005 by the Council of Boards of School Education in India (COBSE) and by the Parliamentary Consultative Committee for the Ministry of Human Resource Development on 12th May, 2005 and 12th July, 2005.

Following on these discussions, the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has taken various measures to reduce stress caused by examinations. The Board proposes to give an extra fifteen minutes to the students to study the question paper before the commencement of the examination. This is expected to help students answer the question paper in a better-planned and un-hurried manner.

Other measures taken by CBSE to reduce examination-related stress, include:-

(i) Tele-Counselling of students to mitigate their sense of anxiety.

(ii) Publication of sample question papers and making schemes to familiarise teachers and students about the nature of questions and question papers.

(iii) Elimination of overall aggregation of marks to reduce unhealthy competition among students.

(iv) Providing facility of compartment examination in two subject in class X and one subject in class XII.

(v) Providing three chances of compartment examination for class X and XII.

(vi) Restructuring of question papers in certain subjects to provide more internal choice in questions.

In addition to the above, CBSE is also examination a proposal to introduce Comprehensive and continuous School based Internal Evaluation in a phased manner and designing of question papers of three hours duration in such a manner that an average student can complete it in two and a half hours.